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By Charlotte Elizabeth.

WITH ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS,
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"She had pictured to herself such a cottage as she had seen near
her father's grounds."

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THE
SIMPLE FLOWER.

"THESE sweet little flowers thrive every where," said Emma, as she walked with her mother through the pleasure grounds of their beautiful residence, and stopped to admire the modest heart's-ease peeping out from the long grass on a shady bank.

"They do indeed, my dear," replied her Mamma ; "and they furnish us with a lovely emblem of that contentment which with godliness is great gain, which knows how to abound and how to suffer need ; and can glorify the Giver of all good under the most afflictive dispensations."

Mrs. Merton said this with much feeling, and Emma heard her sigh as she concluded : she would have sighed also if she had known that they were about to leave the pleasant scenes of her childhood, and to exchange the wealth to which they had long been accustomed, for an income just sufficient to support them above actual want.

Of this Emma was still ignorant, and she went on praising her favorite flower.

"See, Mamma, how simple and pretty it looks in this retired spot, as much at home among the grass and moss as a daisy would be : and yet how elegant it appears in the flower garden yonder, bordering the beds, and sprinkled up and down, where

the gay blossoms grow, with its colors of blue and gold, as bright as the fairest among them. O, it thrives every where!"

Mrs. M. Yes, Emma, it will flourish in every soil, rich and poor; and it will adorn every station, high and low: it bears transplanting well, and endures the change of seasons better than any flower I am acquainted with. So that, if plants were capable of reason, and acted from its dictates, we might say this little shrub fairly merited the partiality with which you regard it.

Emma was delighted to hear her choice commended by her dear Mamma; she gathered one of the blossoms, and kissing it with great affection, tripped along, exclaiming "O, my pretty heart's-ease, how I do love you!"

The next morning Emma appeared at breakfast with a great number of these flowers, and said to her Mother, "I have been trying to find two of them marked exactly alike, but I cannot—I discover some little variety in every one, that seems to distinguish it from its fellows. Is not that odd, Mamma?"

Mrs. M. Not more strange, my dear, than the difference that you see in the faces of your acquaintance. There are many hundred millions of human countenances in the world, and probably not two among them that perfectly resemble each other.

"Well," said Emma, "that brings my flower nearer to ourselves in its character; and I am

determined to rank it first and best among all the flowers of the garden."

"Take care you do not become too partial, Emma," replied her Mamma, smiling; "but I must confess it has often struck me, that among plants the heart's-ease is what the children of God are among mankind."

"I think so too," said Emma, "for the children of God are humble, and lowly, and contented, and beautiful."

"In their lives and characters certainly beautiful," continued Mrs. Merton; "and their works done in faith and humility, with their sacrifices of prayer and praise, when presented through the Saviour's mediation, ascend as a sweet-smelling incense before the LORD."

"Mamma," exclaimed Emma earnestly, "I wish to be like the heart's-ease."

Mrs. M. It is my prayer that you may be what we are describing, my child; but without the grace of God you cannot become so.

Emma. In some things, Mamma, I am even now a little like—for instance, I am very contented.

Mrs. M. Have you met with any temptation to be otherwise, my dear?

Emma. O yes, very often. I have suffered a great many disappointments. It sometimes rains hard when I have set my whole heart on going out; and I see several things that I should like very much to have, but cannot get them;—beside you know

my canary bird died last spring, and my little puppy was lost, and the gardener pulled up my moss-rose tree. Then when my new bonnet came home, what an ugly shape it had ! and I must wear it all the summer and autumn. I assure you, Mamma, if I did not look on the best side of every thing, and try to be very contented, I should be a most unhappy little girl—that is, I don't mean to praise myself”—seeing her mother look grave—“ nor to complain, as if mine was a hard case ; but I am quite sure from my bearing small troubles so well, that I could be very resigned under greater misfortunes.”

Mrs. M. I hope we shall both have the grace of resignation imparted to us, Emma, since we are about to suffer adversity.

“ Adversity, Mamma ! *you* suffer adversity ! O, I hope not, indeed”—and she ran to her mother, and looked up in her face with great anxiety. Mrs. Merton kissed her affectionately and said, “ We shall yet have much to be very thankful for, Emma ; food and raiment, and a comfortable shelter : but the mercantile house to which the chief part of my fortune was intrusted has failed, and we must leave this abode, dismiss our servants, and retire to a very humble cottage, such as the widow Smith lives in. Can you bear transplanting like the heart's-ease, Emma ?”

The little girl was too much confused by this unexpected intelligence, to give any answer. She

looked around her at the pleasant room in which she had so long been happy ; stole a glance through the window at the garden, then turned her eyes upon her mother, and began to cry.

“ Those tears are natural,” said Mrs. Merton, “ but we must not indulge in selfish grief. I have a painful task before me, to break these tidings to my household, who have served me so faithfully, and who must now earn their bread elsewhere. Come, Emma, we will first seek for comfort where alone it is to be found ; in all miseries and distress, it is the best wisdom to go to that friend who is most near, most willing, and most able to help us ; such a friend is God : and then in the strength that will be given us from above, we will make the necessary preparations for leaving this sweet home. Experience will teach us this great truth, that the grace of an Almighty Saviour alone can triumph over all troubles, and disappointments, and adversities, and when human expectations and human aids are at their lowest ebb, can roll in a tide of joy which shall never retire or fail throughout eternity.”

They went to Mrs. Merton’s dressing room, and there they prayed that He who had taught them to serve him in prosperity, would keep them patient and cheerful in adversity, and cause all things to work together for good to them. The servants were then informed of the change in their lady’s circumstances, thanked for their fidelity, and ad-

vised to seek other situations. Emma stood by her mother's side with downcast eyes, and a full heart, while each of the domestics in turn received the thanks and admonitions of a mistress, who in her conduct toward them had never forgotten that she likewise had a Master in heaven : and had rendered to them what was just and equal, caring for their souls, and watching over their conduct as every real Christian master or mistress will do toward all who are brought under their direction.

By giving up the house immediately Mrs. Merton was enabled to oblige the person into whose hands it came ; and having formed no establishment of his own, he was glad to continue the servants in it ; so that Emma and her Mamma, and one young girl, an orphan, who was kept to do the work of the cottage to which they were going, prepared to leave the house in three or four days.

Sad days these were to poor Emma—she struggled hard to appear cheerful in her mother's presence, from a dread of adding to her trials ; but whenever she could escape to the pleasure grounds, she wandered about, indulging herself in the most extravagant regret, and suffering melancholy to overpower her mind : she did not pray to be delivered from over-much sorrow ; she did not reflect that the sorrow of the world worketh death ; but finding a sort of pleasure in being extremely miserable, without considering that it was a reproach to Him who had permitted this distress to come

upon her family, she roamed about, taking a long leave of every spot, and increasing her regret, while her mother was seeking in prayer to have her affections more entirely drawn from things on earth, and more steadily set on those above. Emma thought her grief very natural, and the indulgence of it quite innocent; but our corrupt nature requires to be watched, and its inclinations often checked: while nothing is really innocent that unfits us for the performance of our daily duties, or makes it to appear that the dealings of God toward us are hard and severe.

By a strange contradiction, the more Emma differed from her favorite flower, the more she loved and mourned over it. She employed herself in carrying roots of it to every spot where it had not yet fixed itself, and in this foolish occupation, wasted many hours that might have been devoted to consoling her poor mother, and to improving this afflictive trial to her own advantage. 'It is only for a few days,' thought Emma: but in these few days she acquired a taste for idling, that weeks and months of application could scarcely overcome.

At length the day arrived when they were to bid farewell to this spot; and very early in the morning both mother and daughter took a last survey of the garden and shrubbery. Neither was inclined to speak. Emma carefully dug up several roots of heart's-ease and deposited them in her little basket, among moss and grass, for the purpose of adorning

her new abode. At last they turned into the walk that led from their grounds across a meadow, by which they could gain the house in a different direction. Here Emma abruptly broke silence—“Mamma, shall we never, never come back?”

“I shall come back, my dear, probably before you,” replied her Mamma in a low voice, and looking toward the burying ground, which was at a short distance from whence they stood.

“O! Mamma, do let us go to the church-yard,” cried Emma, hardly knowing why she wished it, yet feeling as if it would be a relief to her mother, and herself also.

To the church-yard they went; and bent their steps to the spot where Emma’s father lay. A tomb covered his remains, which was railed in; and the long grass rose around it, and inserted itself between the iron bars. There were rose trees too, growing from little slips, that Mrs. Merton had set there two years before; and a tall yew tree, hanging its dark boughs over the tomb, gave a solemn and a beautiful effect to the scene.

Emma felt composed by it, but lamented her selfish indulgence when she heard the deep sobs bursting from the bosom of her mother, to whom this spot was dearer than all that the house and garden contained; and she set herself to repair the mischief that she seemed to have done, by speaking comfort to her mother in her way.

“Mamma, we ought to be very thankful even for

the poor cottage we are going to, when we think what a small, dark, lonely dwelling papa has got here."

Mrs. M. My love, we should be thankful for every thing, since all is mercy far above our deserts; but I should be sorry indeed to consider this as your papa's dwelling.

Emma. Why, is he not shut up there?

Mrs. M. The earthly tabernacle of his body is mouldering there, my Emma; but he himself is now clothed with immortality and dwelling in a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 'Better is the day of death than the day of one's birth,' is the word of Scripture. Better every way. With our birth begin our sufferings: our death ends them: our birth enters the best of men into a world, a wilderness: our death enters the good into a world of glory.

"And we know that he is in heaven, because he was so good," added Emma.

"We know that he is in heaven," replied her Mother, "because the Lord JESUS CHRIST has said, 'He that believeth in me hath everlasting life.' 'Though he were dead, yet shall he live.' We are well assured that your father's whole trust was placed in Him, who is the resurrection and the life: and far, indeed, he was from accounting himself good, or resting any hope whatever on his own merits."

"But he was good, notwithstanding," said Emma.

Mrs. M. He was a faithful and a zealous servant

of his heavenly Master, my child ; he was the tenderest, the best of husbands and fathers ; he was meek and lowly, yet firm and undaunted in the cause of truth ; never shrinking from a bold confession of his faith in his crucified Redeemer, nor abashed by the scorn of those who despised the holy name that he professed : he was a Christian, Emma, in the fullest sense of the word.

Emma. Yet, Mamma, you seem to think he was not good enough to go to heaven.

“ I will tell you,” replied Mrs. Merton, “ what I heard him say to his sister who came to see him in his last illness, and who judged as you do. She beheld his perfect composure, witnessed his declaration of the happiness that he felt in the prospect of soon seeing his Saviour face to face ; and remarked to him, ‘ I always said that your death would be a happy one, Francis, because you have lived so good a life, and done your duty in every station so well.’ Your papa raised his head and replied. ‘ Anne, if I had no better hope before me than what the review of my conduct affords, I should say to the rocks, Fall on me, and to the hills, Cover me. I am a guilty and polluted creature, born in sin, and sinning daily. If I look to the perfect law of God, and then to my own heart and life, I must cry, ‘ Wo is me, for I am undone ! But I have an advocate with the Father, JESUS CHRIST the righteous, who is the propitiation for my sins. His merits, his sufferings, his blood, his promises, are what I desire to plead : and feeling

that I do rest on him entirely, as the rock of my salvation, I can rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. The hope to which I have fled for refuge is that set before us in the Gospel: and that hope I have, as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. On CHRIST is all my dependence; and trusting in him I can never be ashamed.'"

"Ah!" said Emma, with a sigh, "I wish I understood these things better!"

Mrs. M. God can reveal them to you, my dear: but you must diligently use the means appointed by him, and by prayer and watchfulness render the study of his word effectual to your improvement. We must depart, Emma; and let the visit we have paid here dwell upon our minds, to moderate the painful feelings which we may experience to-day; for while looking forward to this lowly resting-place for our bodies, and to an eternal inheritance of heavenly glory for our souls, it will seem a light thing to exchange one earthly abode for another. Trials and afflictions we must expect, in common with all our sinful race; as a good bishop has expressed it, "Every man hath his turn of sorrow: whereby, some more, some less, all men are in their times miserable. I never yet could meet with the man that complained not of somewhat. Before sorrow come, I will prepare for it; when it is come, I will welcome it; when it goes, I will take but half a farewell of it; as still expecting its return."

Mrs. Merton slowly walked away : Emma lingered, hastily took a few roots of her plant from the basket, and committed them to the ground, as near the iron railing as she could ; then hastened after her mother, and in a few hours left the home of her infancy.

It was late before they reached their new abode. Emma had no inclination to examine it closely ; there was a little bare-looking garden behind it, in which she set her plants, and then, fatigued and dissatisfied, retired to rest.

In the morning her new situation was felt more keenly. Instead of the elegant hangings and damask curtains that adorned her former bed-chamber, she awoke to gaze upon walls simply colored with a blue wash, and plain white dimity window blinds. She had pictured to herself such a cottage as she had seen near her father's grounds, half hid by stately trees, and covered with jessamine and honeysuckle ; but this was a new building, and very little vegetation as yet appeared about it. The garden was small, unsheltered and principally stocked with useful herbs and roots, and a few young currant and gooseberry trees. The country around was flat and uninteresting, and as far as Emma could perceive from her window, did not even afford a pleasant shady walk. She continued leaning sullenly out at the little casement, until the kind voice of her Mamma from the next room, called her from her meditation.

They joined in prayer as usual, but Emma's mind was listless and not disposed for devotion. She did not feel the thankfulness that her mother poured forth for the blessings yet spared to them; and though she thought it likely that the correction might be for their good, as her mamma acknowledged it to be; yet she would rather have been without it; and all those rebellious feelings dwelt unchecked upon her thoughts, while kneeling before the throne of Him who has said, "I know the things that come into your mind, every one of them."

Emma went down stairs, and in the parlor she found a few geraniums and other plants, which her mother had brought as a relic of their former home: but they only served to remind Emma of the green-house, the parterre, the lawn, the shrubbery, and the thousand sweet flowers that she was to see no more. She turned from them to the breakfast table, and secretly drew a mortifying comparison between the china service which she was accustomed to use, and the plain cottage furniture before her. All seemed wrong; and in the selfish regret of her own heart, she felt not for her poor mother, whose change of circumstances must have pressed more heavily on her from witnessing the very bad grace with which they were met by her little girl. All was silence, until Mrs. Merton, seeing a poor, crippled child, slowly passing by the garden rails, pointed her out to Emma, who first looked, and then peevishly said, "I suppose we

shall be treated with the sight of such objects every day ; we must have blinds to this little ugly window."

"The sight of such objects, Emma," replied her Mamma, very gravely, "may be useful to curb the discontent and ingratitude of our own hearts."

Emma felt the reproof, but it only increased her sullenness.

Mrs. Merton continued ; "Who made us to differ from the most wretched in body, the most depraved in mind of our fellow-creatures ? Was the affluence to which we were born the recompense of our merits, or the fruit of any claim that we had on Him whose the earth is, and all the fulness thereof ? That helpless child, Emma, on whom your delicate eye cannot bear to dwell, has a soul as immortal, as precious in the sight of God, as yours can be : were she suddenly placed in the midst of the comforts that are yet spared to us, how great would be her wonder and thankfulness ! yet upon these mercies I fear you look down with disdain, because your inclinations have been gratified in various things, of which the poor have no idea, and without which many a family in easy circumstances is grateful and happy."

Emma. But, Mamma, is it not natural to feel the loss of these conveniences, considering one has really been always used to them ?

Mrs. M. It is natural, Emma, to the mind that has never learned to rise above the vain things of

this world ; and which regards self-indulgence as the end of its being : but how contrary to the profession of those who acknowledge as the rule of their faith the word which says, ' If ye live after the flesh ye shall die.' ' Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world ; if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.' O my child ! if we would more frequently consider that humbling declaration, ' Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return ; ' if we would seriously reflect how little these human distinctions can avail in the momentous concerns of eternity, we should prize them as mere dross.

Produced from the earth, for a season we bloom,
But short the duration, and certain our doom :
We fade as the leaf, in untimely decay,
And our sins, like a whirlwind, have swept us away.

The oak in its beauty, with majesty crown'd,
The shrub that but trails its low branch on the ground ;
The poisonous weed, and the scent-breathing sweet,
Will mingle their foliage in dust at our feet.

What boots it, O man, though thy station be high,
And fortune may shine like a fair summer's sky ?
A moment will check the free course of thy breath,
And thou must lie down with the poorest in death.

Alas for thy grandeur ! beneath thee is spread,
The worm :—and the worm may pass over thy head ;
The song and the revel no more dost thou crave,
All hush'd in the silence and gloom of the grave.

'There are trees that shall bloom in the regions of bliss,
The Lord is their root, and their beauty is this ;
In righteousness planted, they see not decay,
When earth and her dwellings shall vanish away.

O better to spring like a blade from the ground,
And humble and lowly, and mean to be found ;
Than high in the world's leafy forest aspire,
Prepared for the flames of unquenchable fire !

After breakfast, they resumed the business of Emma's education ; and while at her lessons, she felt all the bad effects of her late unreasonable wanderings at home : her eyes roved continually toward the window, without any real wish to go out, and she was constantly changing her position and longing to vary her employment. Her mother remarked it, and lamented the uneasiness which she witnessed, but knowing that no chastening for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous, she made allowances for the distress of her little girl ; and owned the necessity of the correction which she hoped would in the end yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness. She adored the wisdom and the love by which the secret evil of her child's heart was thus brought forth to view, and a remedy applied, as she humbly trusted, before it became more deeply rooted. We are often disposed to murmur at afflictions, not knowing what messages of mercy they may be made to bring, nor to what a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory they may point the way.

While Mrs. Merton was indulging these thoughts, and fostering a resigned and thankful spirit, little Emma strolled through the garden, rather as a matter of form, than of inclination, and scarcely turned a look upon her heart's-ease, which seemed to have lost its attractions by becoming a resident in a spot that she so much disliked. Dinner brought a renewal of the comparisons which she had made at the breakfast table; and her Mamma being employed all the evening in writing letters, Emma languidly took out and arranged her little treasures of books and toys, and went to bed as melancholy as she had risen.

The next day she made some few attempts to be more cheerful, but without seeking by prayer or serious reflection to impress on her mind the sinfulness of the repinings in which she had indulged. She was tired of being miserable, and wished to recover her usual gayety: but found herself unable to command her spirits, and unwilling to look up to the only true source of all consolation and happiness.

In the evening her Mamma accompanied her to the garden; and after remarking how many useful things were contained in its small space, they stopped before the bed where Emma had placed her plants. They were faint and withering, the flowers dead, the leaves drooping and discolored, and all seemed past recovery.

Emma looked at them with something like sullen satisfaction, and said, "Even heart's-ease will not thrive here."

"Heart's-ease does not thrive here, indeed," replied her Mother, "but whose is the fault? The flower cannot support itself, nor exist without the supply of moisture which a very little care would abundantly furnish it with. I grieve to see your plants drooping thus, Emma, through your neglect; but, my child, I grieve much more to witness the destruction of your own peace of mind, overrun by the weeds of discontent and pride, and left unrefreshed by the showers of divine grace, which you no longer seek to call down by prayer and watchfulness."

Emma knew how well she deserved this rebuke; she blushed, and stammered out, "But, Mamma, the change is so great, and so new—after a little time I shall recover what I have lost."

Mrs. M. Never, Emma, if you neglect the means of grace. You may indeed forget your mortifications, and become reconciled by habit to your new condition; but as soon shall those flowers bloom again, without the aid of earth, air, or water, as your spirit know the pleasantness of God's peace, while you indulge all these natural and evil feelings, and go on frowardly in the way of your own heart.

Emma. Why, Mamma, do not *you* regret the change, and the loss of so many delightful things?

Mrs. M. Perhaps I do, too much, Emma; but I hope the comforts of God's word are not lost upon me: when the Son of God came to suffer for my

sins, he had not where to lay his head : he depended upon the bounty of his disciples for his daily meal, and I confess the view of that cottage, and our comparative wealth, constrains me to cry out, ‘I am not worthy of the least of thy mercies !’ Let us go to the Scriptures for comfort. David, the sweet Psalmist of Israel says, ‘This is my comfort in my affliction : for thy word hath quickened me.’ While performance of the promise of God is delayed, we may be ‘rejoicing in hope,’ and the promise is our ‘comfort in affliction ;’ a comfort divine, strong, and lasting ; a comfort that will not, like all others, fail us when we most want it, in the day of sickness, darkness, distress, and at the hour of death ; but will always keep pace with our necessities, increasing in proportion as the pleasures of the world decrease, and then becoming complete when they are no more. So powerful is the word of God to revive us, when dead either in sins or in sorrows—‘Thy word hath quickened me.’

“Mamma,” said Emma, “I now see that I have been very wrong. I boasted that I was like the heart’s-ease, and could be contented any where ; but now, both my flowers and myself are perishing through my sinful temper. I will remedy this mischief ;”—and she ran to fetch water, and poured it plentifully over the fading leaves. “Now,” said she, “they will recover, and you shall see how different a child I shall become.”

But the poor plants had been neglected too long :

they continued to wither, and Emma soon had the mortification to see them quite dead. Nor was this her worst trouble, for she found that the **LORD** will sometimes hide his eyes from those who have rejected his counsel, and who would none of his reproof. She was left, for a time, to suffer the greatest distress of mind ; and when looking upon the yellow leaves of her heart's-ease, she would ask herself with secret dread, ' What, if the **LORD** should leave me to perish also, and never more revive me with the dew of his mercy !'

How gladly now would Emma have changed the cottage so lately despised for the poorest hovel in the land, if by so doing she could have regained that sweet confidence which she once felt in approaching the throne of grace with her Mamma, and addressing God as her reconciled Father, in **CHRIST JESUS**. Often did she repeat the lines of a beautiful hymn that her mother had taught her :

" Return, O holy Dove, return,
Sweet messenger of rest !
I hate the sins that made thee mourn,
And drove thee from my breast."

But little Emma was to be brought into yet deeper waters of trial before she was comforted. She was to experience more fully the truth of the Apostle's declaration, ' I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing,' and to learn how many a stumbling-block the enemy of our salvation can lay in the path of those who begin seriously to

inquire after the way in which God has commanded his people to walk.

It has been observed that Mrs. Merton still retained in her service a young girl whose orphan state rendered her a fit object for such compassionate care as her lady could yet show. Martha was several years older than Emma, and early misfortunes had been so far blessed to her, as to excite a desire for more abiding comforts than this changeful world can give: but Martha was "slow of heart to believe," and like too many others she looked less into the word of God for confirmation of the truths which she heard, than to the actions of his professed servants, to discover how far their lives corresponded with the peculiar sanctity insisted on by them as inseparable from the Christian character. Our LORD tells his disciples, that they are "as a city set on a hill, which cannot be hid,"—we know how they are made "a spectacle to all men;" and the adversary is ever on the watch to blaspheme the Author and Finisher of their faith, if that faith fails to bear the plenteous and untainted fruit which the supply of his grace is sufficient to produce in the conduct of the true believer. Martha saw that her young lady considered herself a pious character: her little books, selected by her Mamma, were all of the most profitable description; she was punctual in prayer, and read the Scriptures daily, aloud. Martha had also heard her speak frequently with mingled pity and censure of children, who, being less carefully

instructed, were heedless of those things which belonged to their eternal peace: whose hearts were set on their toys, their amusements, and foolish distinctions in dress: seeking to outshine each other in the display of fine clothes; but totally regardless of the inward adorning that the apostle Paul recommends. Beside, Emma very often made use of Scripture language in blaming Martha for her occasional faults; and took so much of the preacher on herself, that it appeared quite natural for the girl to examine her practice very closely.

It will be readily supposed by those who are at all accustomed to watch their own evil hearts, that Emma was too ready to vent upon Martha the ill-humor occasioned by her discontent and self reproach, under the late reverse of fortune. She was indeed very careful that her mother should not witness such unbecoming conduct; but she frequently behaved in a most tyrannical manner to this servant girl; and then, to prevent her complaining to Mrs. Merton, she was obliged to bribe her with some present, or to make amends as she called it, by conversing with a degree of familiarity that her Mamma would by no means have allowed of. Nothing was more contrary to Mrs. Merton's character than pride; but she knew that it was no part of Christian humility to do away with the distinctions which God has been pleased to permit between the various ranks and classes in society. She taught her little girl, both by doctrine and example, to be

gentle, patient, and obliging toward inferiors ; but cautioned her against forgetting the respect due to herself by encouraging any thing like intimacy with those whose education and habits must render them unsuitable companions for her. Until the reverses in their fortune took place, Emma had found no great difficulty in obeying her mother's precepts, in this instance ; and she was both respected and loved by the domestics in her former abode. But now Martha had too often sufficient grounds for the remark, that it was no great matter to be good humored when people had every thing at hand to content them : but that Miss Emma, instead of pitying her for having all the work, that so many had shared before, now thrown upon her alone, treated her worse than a slave, because she could not do as much as three or four people in as little time. Often adding, what a sad thing it was, that Miss Emma's religion did not teach her to be more reasonable toward her fellow-creatures.

Observations like this, Martha would occasionally make, when she knew that Emma must overhear a great part of them : they irritated the little girl, roused the evil spirit of pride : and very frequently provoked her to scold and threaten, when she should rather have mourned in secret, and prayed for grace to contend against the feelings that exposed her to such mortifying reproofs. It is by no means proper for servants to convey their remarks in Martha's rude manner ; though a truly Christian child will

ever be thankful to the lowest inferior for a timely caution, given in respectful and modest terms: if, however, people by intemperate language and inconsistent conduct, expose themselves to the contempt of those around them, they must expect to be the subject of such observations as they would little like to hear. But a much higher principle should operate as a check on all unbecoming demeanor: the pernicious effect of their example, is to harden others, through the deceitfulness of sin, both against just rebuke, when properly applied, and also against the strivings of the spirit in their own bosoms, who, by the voice of conscience, reproves them of sin and of judgment. Satan furnishes them with excuses, to stifle the warning voice. ‘If those who know so much better what is right than a poor ignorant servant can do, give way to every peevish and unreasonable humor, what can be expected from me?’ And thus screening themselves behind an evil example, they indulge the corrupt propensity of their own dispositions; and refusing to hearken, may perish, long after those who have so cruelly promoted their destruction forget that ever they had seen them; but will not the LORD visit for these things? That ‘the poor had the Gospel preached to them,’ was a distinguishing mark of his divine mission. To preach the Gospel to them he was anointed by the Father with the Holy Spirit; and is it not a most awful thing to oppose that work in which the Triune JEHOVAH has vouchsafed in an especial manner to engage?

Mrs. Merton made a remark of this kind to Emma, on some occasion when she discovered an instance of improper conduct on her part toward Martha. Emma was both abashed and alarmed : “ I am sure, Mamma, I had no intention to do any thing so wicked ; nothing could be further from my thoughts.”

“ I believe it, Emma,” replied her Mother, “ but is your sin palliated by that want of consideration ? Surely not : if the law of God were engraven on your heart, it would ever be present to your thoughts, as a most powerful check upon evil suggestions. Our blessed **LORD** has bade us *take heed* that we offend not one of his little ones—the young, the poor, the weak of his flock. If by neglecting to take heed, you commit this sin, and bring on yourself the wo denounced on him by whom the offence cometh, is the vengeance of God to sleep, and his word to become void, because you suffer a slothful temper to wrap you in spiritual slumber ?”

Emma attempted to excuse herself on the plea of their misfortunes having rendered her more hasty and peevish than she was naturally disposed to be.

“ Tell me,” said Mrs. Merton, “ for what purpose are afflictions sent ?” Receiving no answer, she continued, “ Wherefore did the **LORD** lead the people of Israel for forty years through a wilderness, full of gloom and danger, beset by foes ; and keep them dependent on a daily miracle for their daily bread ?”

Emma replied, “ To humble them, and to prove them, and to see what was in their hearts.”

Mrs. M. Yes; mark, to *humble* them, not to make them proud and passionate: to *prove* and *show* them the evil already in their hearts, not to implant bad dispositions that never existed there before. O my child! what accusation is this to bring against your Heavenly Father, when you would make the rod a root, not a corrector, of the deceit and desperate wickedness that reign in the heart of every unrenewed sinner; and too obstinately cling even about that of the believer!

Emma. But, Mamma, the temptation is so great. You don't know how provoking Martha sometimes is.

Mrs. M. Temptation, my dear, is to be avoided: we are instructed to pray against it; but, as the **LORD** sometimes sees it necessary for the trial of our faith, we have a blessedness pronounced on him who endureth temptation: him, who recollecting the promise that a way of escape shall ever be left open, pleads his own weakness, and casting himself upon the **LORD** in believing prayer, experiences that he 'can do all things through **CHRIST** who strengtheneth him.' A state of affluence is fraught with many snares, calculated to draw and beguile the soul from the contemplations of heavenly treasures. Of this we have a proof in the young ruler who came to **CHRIST**, with a fair account of his past duties, and a professed desire to perform whatever might be further necessary to obtain eternal life: but when the Searcher of hearts probed the secret unsound-

ness of his, by requiring him to renounce his worldly wealth, he was so entangled in its snares that he went away ; turned his back on the Saviour, and plunged into those things that would finally drown him in perdition. But, delusive as riches are, poverty and sorrow have their perils too. It was in a season of peculiar privation and bodily suffering, that the great enemy approached the Son of God with his specious temptations : it was in the hour of personal danger, that Peter so lamentably fell. Satan, who overcame David in the midst of sloth and luxury, defiling him with many sins, and leading him to pierce himself through with many sorrows, overwhelmed Job in the deepest penury, affliction, and anguish of body and mind, for the same hateful and cruel purpose. How formidable is the power, how deadly the malice of this our inveterate foe ! Christians can boast that they are not ignorant of his devices ; yet how frequently is his very existence forgotten, at the moment when he is nearest to us : and how criminally negligent are we in not putting on the whole armor of God, the only defence against his overwhelming attacks !

“ Mamma,” said Emma, “ considering how very crafty and strong this enemy is, can it be wondered at if he often gets the better of a weak child like me ?”

Mrs. Merton shook her head—“ Your object is to justify yourself, as if Satan’s strength must be too great against you ; but beware of that error. Have

I not just said that we are too remiss, in not wielding our spiritual weapons against our spiritual foe? Surely we are culpable beyond all expression in consenting to the suggestions of the devil, who, let it ever be remembered, can only tempt; he cannot compel. To the weakest child is the encouragement as sure, as to the strongest and most experienced Christian, 'Resist the devil and he will flee from you.' Who shall compel us for a moment to wear his chains, when we are invited to behold the mighty work wrought to deliver sinners 'from the bondage of Satan,' and to make them 'free indeed?' Has not the Lord JESUS 'through death destroyed him that hath the power of death, even the devil?' Are not all who believe, 'more than conquerors through him that loved us?' The subtlety and power of your adversary do indeed call for incessant watchfulness and prayer; but will never excuse your yielding in the smallest instance to his temptations."

Thus constantly admonished, Emma learned more carefully to watch over her own heart; and the consequence was an increasing knowledge of herself, and a deepened view of the depravity with which that fountain of her thoughts, words, and actions, was tainted: until reduced almost to despair, she would secretly exclaim, 'If out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, what an evil treasure must be lodged in mine! I bring forth from it nothing but evil things: I am con-

stantly disgracing myself and disgusting others, by some new proof of a proud, wicked, contentious, and uncharitable disposition. These cannot be the feelings of God's children, for the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: none of these things belong to my character, and therefore I am not a Christian?' In this view of herself Emma was perfectly right; she had never fully experienced the renewing power of the Holy Ghost, never put off that old man, the corrupt nature that was born with her, nor had she with her heart believed unto salvation; but Emma was quite wrong in the conclusion which she drew from this distressing survey. Supposing it impossible to contend successfully against the enemy, who seemed to laugh to scorn all her feeble attempts at self-reformation, she was completely discouraged, and gave up the point, expecting to be converted by a miracle of grace at some future period; or, what was too frequently the case, driving the great subject of salvation entirely from her thoughts, and laboring on mere worldly motives, for a more decent and becoming line of conduct; laying a restraint on her temper, and persuading herself that by so doing she was rendering her character amiable and respectable. In all this she met with slight internal opposition: the enemy of souls cares little how moral and decorous, how benevolent and praiseworthy, our outward demeanor may become, so long as it is not

founded on a regard to the divine command, a deep sense of God's holiness, and an entire dependence on His sacred influence, working in us that we may have a good will to do His pleasure, and working with us when we have that good will. Emma at first wished the **LORD** to effect in her the change that she knew was requisite; but to be a fellow-worker together with God, to do her part in it, by a lively faith, perseverance in prayer, and steady resistance against besetting sins, this was too arduous an undertaking for her slothful spirit; and while, through her tender mother's care, the seed of the word was still daily sown, she suffered a thousand weeds to spring up, and choke the soil, making it unfruitful, until her religion became a mere form; and she rested content in the observance of outward duties, indifferent to the most awakening calls of exhortation from without, and conscience from within.

More than two years thus passed away, and Emma improved in every thing but the most important of all—she grew in stature, but not in grace: her features were pleasing, but her real character unlovely; her manners were insinuating, but her temper worldly, and her thoughts unholy. In every branch of education that her mother, herself highly accomplished, continued to exercise her in, she excelled: but alas! what availed these external decorations, while her soul was secretly perishing for lack of that knowledge which she was too indolent to seek!

She had now entered her fifteenth year, and a new source of anxiety assailed her, which strongly roused her feelings ; Mrs. Merton was of a delicate constitution, and since the death of her husband she had not recovered from the effects of her long and anxious attendance upon him through a painful illness. Emma was accustomed to see her mamma look pale, and eat little ; but now she was becoming so very thin, and her appetite was so entirely gone, and her whole appearance showed such extreme weakness, that Emma began to be very much frightened about her.

The aged clergyman of the parish died. His successor, a most pious and excellent minister, soon heard of the reverse in Mrs. Merton's fortune, and observed her quiet devout attendance upon the outward ordinances of religion. He felt more interested in her, because of her sickly appearance, and the anxious looks of her daughter. He took an opportunity of calling at the cottage, and offered his friendship and services with so much sincere friendship, that Mrs. Merton gladly accepted them.

Mr. Selby, that was the minister's name, had a daughter two years older than Emma. Mary Selby was pious, cheerful, active, and always looking out for opportunities of doing good. She used to say, 'There are younger girls than I buried in the church-yard, and if I am called away also, I must not be found like the foolish virgins, sleeping in idleness, w'thout oil in my lamp. There is much

for such as I am to do ; many poor children are ignorant of what I am made happy by knowing, that JESUS CHRIST is the Saviour of all who believe, and that they who name his Name are required to depart from iniquity. I must assist to teach these poor children ; and I must earn a little, and save a little to give to those who are sending Bibles and Missionaries to the destitute in our own country, and to the Heathen.' With these feelings, it will be believed that Mary was seldom idle. Between her school and her other work, she found that it was pleasant to redeem the time, and improve it. Of Emma she soon became so fond that there was some danger of her being drawn off from her usual employments by her society ; but Mary watched against the temptation, and instead of becoming idle herself, taught Emma to be industrious.

It will readily be believed that such a companion was a great acquisition to our poor Emma, even in a worldly point of view : for she had scarcely an acquaintance of an age suitable to her own ; and since Mrs. Merton became so exceedingly weak, her daughter had little inclination, and less opportunity for any society beyond the walls of their own cottage, until this happy arrival at the parsonage. It was no small comfort to find a sympathizing friend in whose indulgent ear she could pour forth her complaints and anxieties respecting her mother : but in more important matters the benefit which she derived from associating with Mary, was incalcul-

table. Satisfied that Mrs. Merton was most sincerely pious, and observing the correct manner of Emma, the Selbys concluded that her daughter, though more reserved in her expressions, was equally influenced by the spirit of Christianity. Mary, indeed, sometimes doubted: but the uncertainty only increased her anxiety to render her conversation as profitable as possible to her young companion. She consulted her on many excellent plans for the temporal comfort and spiritual improvement of the poor around them; she read with her the most interesting and affecting details of the progress of divine truth, at home and abroad; often inviting her to join in prayer for the fulfilment of that glorious time, when, 'from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, the **LORD**'s name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered unto His name, and a pure offering;' when 'the **LORD** shall have turned again the captivity of Zion, and all Israel shall be saved.' Over such passages as these, Mary would even weep for joy, as she traced in the great work so auspiciously commenced throughout the world, the dawning of an eternal day. "Think, dear Emma," she would say, "how great a cause for humble thankfulness have we, not only in being permitted to behold these things, but in reflecting that our own country is made the first, the most distinguished instrument, in promoting the **LORD**'s gracious purposes! Look at this small speck on the globe. The

British dominions, long receiving the Gospel, and the abundant grace of CHRIST, are now like a little fountain supplying a majestic river, dispersing the treasure over the earth, in a constantly augmenting stream of blessings!"

Emma saw so much to admire as well as to love in her new friend, that she often spoke to her in the language of commendation, which Mary failed not to check and reprove. She would say, " You compare me, Emma, with those unhappy persons who scarcely know that they have immortal souls, and who never reflect that they must stand before the judgment seat of CHRIST, and give account of themselves to Him who cannot be deceived. Poor creatures! they do not consider that our time and all the advantages enjoyed by us are but lent, and to be employed for the glory of Him who intrusts us with them. When, in the sixteenth chapter of St. Luke, I meet with those words, ' Give an account of thy stewardship, for thou mayest be no longer steward; I am led to serious reflection. I know this passage concerns me: and what a careless unfaithful steward I have been of all the blessings committed to my care!"

" You judge yourself very severely, dear Mary," said Emma. " Nobody else thinks so of you."

" And if I do judge myself," she replied, " it is but what I am commanded to do. By examining, with sincerity and prayer, our own conduct and motives, we are enabled to see what is wrong, and

directed where, especially, to strive against ourselves. This I suppose is what the apostle St. Paul means, when he says, 'judge yourselves brethren, that ye be not judged of the **LORD**.' As to what others may think of me, there are two texts from the same Apostle, that serve to prevent my being much affected by that. He speaks of some, who 'measuring themselves by themselves, are not wise.' This arms me against such dangerous commendations as yours, dear Emma. And when I am blamed or ridiculed for following what I know to be my duty, I can in my heart, I hope, without any angry or contemptuous feeling, address such censors thus: 'With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you or of man's judgment.' I know that 'He that judgeth me is the **LORD**'—'who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the heart.' "

" You seem," said Emma, " to have a text of Scripture ready for every occasion."

" If I have not," answered Mary, " it is my own fault. **God** has given us his word as 'a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our paths;' but to what purpose, if we do not take it abroad with us, when we walk in this dangerous world ?"

" But how can you remember so much of it ?" asked Emma.

Mary. I know my need of such defence and direction: and I pray constantly to have the law of **God** put into my mind, and written on my heart:

then, too, I have the assistance of pious parents, who point out to me the passages most profitable for one of my youth and inexperience. I endeavor to read the Bible not as a matter of form, or of merit, as I fear some ignorant young persons do ; but as I should listen to directions, by which alone I could escape straying into the haunts of wild beasts, or falling from the edge of a precipice, when about to undertake a long and difficult journey.

“ You make me fear that I never yet have read the Scriptures properly,” observed Emma.

“ Then begin to-day,” said Mary : “ Delay not : it is not your bodily safety, but the eternal interest of your immortal soul that depends on it. God gave his book to be studied ; and has annexed a blessing to the devout observance of his command : while those who neglect it go on in darkness, and stumble, perhaps to fall for ever.”

In the world a trembling stranger,
Shall I slight a heavenly guide ?
Wherfore roam in fear and danger,
When the Lord would help provide :
Snares and perils spread before me,
Welcome be the beam that shows
Every evil brooding o'er me,
Each device of crafty foes.

While the page of truth perusing,
Lord, do thou unseal mine eyes ;
So, the trifler's part refusing,
I should run to reach the prize.

On my solemn thought impressing
 Things eternal, though unseen ;
 Bid me scorn the worldling's blessing,
 Joys unstable, poor and mean.

When thy law, declared in thunder,
 Makes my guilty soul afraid ;
 Let me speed, in grateful wonder,
 To the Rock's protecting shade.
 Blessed JESUS—Rock of ages !—
 Holy Spirit ! help I crave ;
 When I search the sacred pages,
 On my soul the words engrave !

Mary repeated these lines with great feeling ; and Emma was much affected by the conversation. She secretly compared the eagerness of her friend in seeking instruction from the Scriptures, and her anxiety to keep constantly on her mind all that she there learned, with her own cold, careless performance of what she dared not entirely neglect. 'I feel as if I had omitted a duty, when I do not read a chapter in the Bible,' thought Emma ; 'and when I do so, as if I had performed an act of obedience : but I have not prayed as Mary does, to remember what I read continually afterward ; mamma tells me to do so, and, I know, she does it herself : how came I to neglect such a great duty ? I will begin this very day, as Mary advises me, and never again omit it.'

But poor Emma found it more easy to make this good resolution than to abide by it. Something

was constantly intervening to call off her attention ; frequently she delayed the reading of her Bible for half-an-hour, and found the opportunity gone, through successive interruptions. Beside—and she felt it the worst of all obstacles—there was in her heart an unwillingness to persevere steadily in the course of reading and meditation that she had marked out for herself: and trifles were not more ready to intrude than she was to give her attention to them ; although a sad, comfortless, and guilty feeling seemed to imbitter her mind all day long, when the duty had been unattended to.

Despairing at last of ever becoming like Mary in this respect, she resolved to give up the attempt altogether : but her looks were so overcast in consequence, that her watchful mother felt assured some new trouble pressed upon the evidently humbled heart of her child. By the affectionate inquiries of Mrs. Merton, Emma was at length induced to tell the whole truth. Her Mamma secretly thanked the **LORD** who had blessed her daughter with a friend so truly valuable ; and replied to Emma's sad recital of her discouragements and despair. “ What you complain of, my love, is the general experience of all who diligently set themselves to inquire after the things that belong unto their peace. Let the constant obstructions with which you meet, keep you watchful against an enemy whom you find so eager to throw every stumbling-block in your way : and while you feel your own

proneness to turn aside after all the idle baits that he would allure you with, consider, both how very much so evil and thankless a nature needs the renewing of the Holy Ghost, and how great is the mercy and compassion that can so long bear with our deeply rooted sinfulness!"

"But, Mamma," said Emma, "I never, never can keep to Mary's rule; and I must give it up."

Mrs. M. I grieve to hear my Emma use such language. I have seen you roused to double exertion, when any difficulty impeded the progress of your studies, or opposed the gratification of your wishes: is it only in the trifles of this fleeting life that you can persevere, while the great and eternal business of salvation is to be laid aside so readily at the first obstacle?

Emma hung her head. "You know, Mamma, I am too weak and sinful to do any thing right of myself; and I do not feel as if any help was given me from above."

Mrs. M. What help can you require, my child, beyond that so freely and impressively promised by our LORD? Find the eleventh chapter of St. Luke, and read the ninth, and four following verses.

Emma read:—"And I say unto you, ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father,

will he give him a stone ? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent ? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion ? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children ; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him ? ”

“ Now,” continued Mrs. Merton, “ our blessed **LORD** here shows us the natural inclination of an earthly parent to supply the wants of his offspring, and the improbability of his disappointing their reliance on his care and judgment. Is there no comfortable help promised in the concluding words, ‘ If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children ; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him ? ’ Is there no confidence inspired by the positive assurance, ‘ I say unto you, ask, and it shall be given you ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you ? ’ ”

Emma. Ah ! yes Mamma ; it is very encouraging.

“ Then go, my child, into my dressing-room,” said Mrs. Merton, “ take that portion of Scripture to meditate and pray over ; and be assured the promise is unto you, as much as to any who heard it uttered.”

Emma gladly obeyed : and as she went, could not acknowledge that help was already sent, in the unsel and assistance of her mother.

Emma repeated all this to Mary, at their next meeting : who replied, “ It is with you as it was with me : and you must learn to wait the **LORD**’s

leisure. He often makes his people wait, for a trial of their faith and patience: and you must remember that we are told to consider Him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest we be weary and faint in our minds."

"What do you understand by that?" said Emma.

Mary replied, "Papa tells me the Apostle means to direct our attention, under all troubles, and persecutions, and hinderances, from without or within, to the Lord Jesus, who patiently endured more than we can imagine, to accomplish the great work of our salvation; and the recollection of whose sufferings must make us ready cheerfully to encounter whatever he permits to molest us, while we are running the race set before us, to obtain the inheritance which He has laid up for us in heaven."

Thus assisted and admonished, Emma was able to persevere in her wise resolution; always praying to be kept steadfast in the work of the Lord. She found the promise fulfilled to her, and many a warning or encouraging text was brought to her mind, to check the rising murmur of discontent, to combat the spirit of sloth and self-indulgence, and to lead her onward in the narrow path, overhung as it was by a dark cloud, that constantly saddened her mind as she looked on the drooping form and faded countenance of a parent, rendered daily more dear to the child who now felt the full value of her instructions and example.

Mr. Selby was in very easy circumstances, and

managed to convey many comforts to the cottagers that their means could not have afforded them ; but above all he supplied them liberally with the consolations of real religion. In his visits to them Mary usually accompanied him : very often she went alone, to carry some little delicacy in her small basket ; and by her manner of offering it she made it doubly welcome to the poor invalid ; for Mrs. Merton soon became too weak to go beyond the narrow bounds of her own garden and the adjoining ground. One afternoon in autumn, the two young friends were rambling there, and Mrs. Merton slowly following them ; when a bird that appeared to have been lamed in its wing, hopped before them on the path, and endeavored to get away—they pursued it to a corner of the field, but it made its escape through the hedge. Emma stooped to look after it, and discovered a profusion of her old favorites, the heart's-ease, blowing on the bank, in the richest beauty.

“O ! Mamma, Mamma,” she exclaimed, “I have found”—and there she stopped, with the painful recollections that arose at the moment.

“You have found some old friends, I believe, Emma,” replied her Mother.

Emma. Why no, Mamma, not exactly so : but of that race.

“Some of the very same that my Emma brought from her home,” said Mrs. Merton.

Emma. Impossible, Mamma.

Mrs. M. Not at all, my dear : I foresaw from the unhappy nature of your feelings at the time, that your heart's-ease would command but little of your care ; and after you were gone to rest, on the evening of your arrival, I removed a root from the garden to this spot; to prove whether, under proper treatment, heart's-ease would not thrive even here.

Emma. O ! my dear Mamma, what a lesson those flowers give me !

"A sweet lesson," said Mary, "that shows us what we may learn by considering the lilies of the field how they grow."

"Yes, added Mrs. Merton, "He who clothes them, will not only give us covering for our bodies, but will also adorn us with humility, meekness, patience, and every fruit of the Spirit, if such be our desire. Let us but do our part, as faithful laborers ; and see here a proof that He will not fail to perform his."

"Sweet little flower," thought Emma, as she placed one in her bosom, "you shall be my preacher."

It was not long after this, that Mrs. Merton became quite unable to leave her bed ; and the medical gentleman whom Mr. Selby had introduced to her, confessed that he had no hope of seeing her again quit it alive. Emma nursed her mother with the tenderest care ; and Mary shortened the time usually allotted to her other charitable works, to share the task—'For,' thought she, 'here are the fatherless and the widow in affliction, looking to us for succor ; and He has said, "I will have mercy and not

sacrifice." My Bible and Missionary box may be less full ; but this present work is given to me, and I must do it with all my might.'—And so indeed she did ; for when Mrs. Merton became much worse, she asked and obtained leave of her parents to stay entirely with Emma, and a clever old nurse, whom Mr. Selby had sent to attend the cottage.

The heart's-ease, from the fields, still formed a part in every bouquet which the girls prepared for their beloved, but dying charge ; and Mrs. Merton would smile as she bade Emma observe how well it graced a sick room ; often outliving all the flowers from the garden, and expanding one little bud after another, as if still in its native soil.

"I never loved it so well," said Emma, trying to hide her tears, "as since it cheered your painful hours, Mamma."

"I cannot help preferring hyacinths, and other bulbous roots," remarked Mary.

Mrs. M. Why, my dear ?

Emma. Because they give a more striking idea of the resurrection, Madam. When I bury such a thing in the earth, and consider what a different and lovely object will arise, I seem to comprehend the feeling under which St. Paul wrote the fifteenth chapter of his first Epistle to the Corinthians—it fills my mind with such delightful hopes and anticipations.

"Yet I cannot give up my heart's-ease," said Emma.

“The **LORD** has given us,” said Mrs. Merton, “a great variety of beautiful types, my children ; one flower may more aptly represent to us the mortal life, another the future state of the Christian, while all proclaim the tidings of their Maker’s power, and providential care.—Nothing is formed in vain : whatever we overlook, in this wide and wonderful creation, is a loss to ourselves ; for all speak eloquently of Him for whose pleasure they are and were created.”

“But some are so small that we cannot examine them,” said Emma.

“Yes,” replied her Mother, “man, as he approaches further in science, makes new discoveries of his own ignorance. The solar microscope, an instrument that magnifies every object to many thousand times its natural size, shows a small tuft of the common grass, when running to seed, in inconceivable beauty, as the richest flower of delicate green, studded and fringed with silver—a most magnificent object, yet trod under our feet without a thought. When the Apostle declares the glory of man to be as the flower of grass, he likens it to one of the most beautiful as well as fragile things in nature : ‘the wind passeth over it, and it is gone—but the word of the **LORD** shall endure for ever ;’ and that is the word of the Gospel, which brings to light life and immortality, and shows to our sight of faith, a glory that cannot fade.”

In such conversations as these, Mrs. Merton

passed the hours, when she had strength sufficient ; and in listening to the blessed word of life, accompanied, as it alway was, with united prayer, and frequently with the plain and forcible exposition of the pious Mr. Selby.

That kind minister had visited Mrs. Merton one day, and delicately told her, that on her departure it was the wish of himself and his wife, to receive Emma as an inmate of their house, and to educate her with their Mary. The heart of Mrs. Merton sang for joy at this intimation ; and since an allowance was reserved for Emma in the wreck of their property, that would prevent her ever being a burden on these generous friends, she had no difficulty in accepting the offer.

On that night she was so ill that Mary and Emma would not leave her apartment ; and Mrs. Merton, conscious that the hand of death was upon her, did not wish to deprive them of a scene so awful and so instructive.

After a time she appeared to slumber, and Mary whispered to Emma, " Now let us read together and pray."

" Let us read," replied Emma, " the last chapter of Hosea."

" Why that ?" asked Mary.

" Because," said Emma, " that chapter brought so much comfort to me, when my own sinfulness had made me so very miserable ; it helped me to praise the **LORD**, when I felt that his anger began to be

turned away ; and it suits me now, because it assures me that in Him the fatherless findeth mercy."

They read the chapter, and Mary could not but feel how applicable it was to poor Emma.

They prayed, and then Mary said, " You are much supported, dear Emma."

" Yes, I am," she replied, while wiping away the tears that streamed down her cheeks. " My mother is about to be taken away from this world, to eternal glory, but my loss will be her great gain. If I could tell you, Mary, all that passed in my mind for some months after our first acquaintance, you would say the **LORD** is wonderful indeed in his doings toward the children of men. If I had not been so corrected, my soul would have been lost : and if I had not been so comforted, my heart would have broken. And it would break now," she added, looking toward the bed, and sobbing, " only that I know where she is going."

" Yes, my dear Emma," said Mary, " is there not comfort in that ? The day of human life, is ' a day of trouble,' a day of darkness and gloominess, which nothing can brighten, but the light of **GOD'S** countenance ; nothing can render comfortable, but a speedy answer of mercy and peace from above. When heart and flesh fail, to find the **LORD** ' your rock, your fortress, your deliverer, your **GOD**, your strength in whom you can trust, your buckler, and the horn of your salvation, and your high tower.' Sweet names ! we know little of our wants and

dangers, or we should better feel how impossible it would be to spare one of the many titles and characters under which He makes himself known to us.—What comfort could we take from all these glorious sayings, if we did not know that JESUS is Lord, yea Lord of lords, one with the Father, God over all, blessed for ever ? His sufferings as man, can atone for the sins of a guilty world.—I love to think of the Lord JESUS now, as holding the keys of death and of hell—as ‘He that shutteth and no man openeth ; that openeth and no man shutteth.’”

“ Yes,” added Emma, “ He which was dead and is alive.”

“ And therefore,” said Mary, “ because he was dead and is alive, he says unto us, ‘ Fear not.’ Death is no longer an object of fear ; for the Lord JESUS has been in the grave, to overcome him who hath the power of death, that is the devil. And since he is God, we are sure he has power to quicken whom he will, and to fulfil his promise. He has said, ‘ Because I live, ye shall live also.’ I could not trust a Saviour who was less than Almighty. Let us be thankful then that our young minds are impressed with these precious truths. How many, even at this hour, may be watching the last breath of those who are no less dear to them than this departing soul is to us : they think of heaven as a desirable place ; and recollecting all that was most endearing in the character and conduct of the object before them, they look upon

eternal life as the sure reward of such an amiable person. Alas! how many believe that a decent attention to outward duties, and a patient submission to sickness or sorrow, shall be crowned with glory, and honor, and immortality!"

"They do not consider," Emma replied, "that their worst sufferings are infinitely less than they must deserve, if it was only because the best that they can do falls so far short of what God requires. And their obedience would not purchase heaven if it was perfect, for you know the **LORD** bids us confess that we are unprofitable servants; after doing all, it is no more than our duty—and by the deeds of the law can no flesh be justified."

Mary remarked, "The low notions that people in general have of heaven make them suppose it is so easily earned. Do they consider that 'eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him?'—do they know what it is 'to see His face,' and 'have His name written in their foreheads;' to be 'a pillar in His temple' and to 'go no more out?' The soul must be fitted and prepared to enjoy the glories of heaven, by making communion with God, in prayer, and in His word and service, its delight on earth. If these things are strange or wearisome to us now, they would be so then. The most beautiful scenery has no charms for the blind, nor the sweetest music for the deaf; nor could the presence of glorified spirits, of holy

angels, and of God himself, delight the soul that continues 'earthly, sensual, devilish,'—such are all who have not been renewed in the image of their Maker."

" Yet how many die in this false peace," said Emma: " they 'have no bands in their death:' but the delusion in which they perish is their own choice. They know that the Bible reveals God's will to man: they are aware that unless they do His will, they cannot please him: yet they put that book aside, and marking out a path of duties of their own choosing, they determine to get to heaven by that broad road, rather than seek the one narrow way that He has appointed. It is so wonderful to see God's word neglected, where his name is confessed, and his worship carried on, that if we did not too clearly behold it, we could scarcely believe it possible."

" My Mamma never neglected it," said Emma; " in prosperity it seemed to keep her humble; and in adversity to make her cheerful; while, as you well know, it has been the best medicine to her in sickness, and now smooths the bed of death,"—her heart was too full to say more.

" It has lighted her steps," exclaimed Mary, " to the entrance of the valley of the shadow of death: and now the Lord himself will be her light and support, while she is passing through that valley."

" O yes," said Emma with animation, " the Lord will surely come: He says, ' I go to prepare a place

for you ; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself ; that where I am, there ye may be also.' "

Mrs. Merton extended her hand to her child, and in a faint voice said, " Here is a word of comfort from that well-spring of consolation, the holy Bible. David could say, when in affliction, ' My flesh and my heart faileth ; but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever.' He said this because he could also say, ' Whom have I in heaven but thee ? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.' ' In his presence is fulness of joy ; and at his right hand there are pleasures for evermore.' "

They drew nearer to her, and she went on :—

" ' The sting of death is sin.' You have felt the sharpness of that sting, my Emma, in the days of your health. O remember, then, how terrible it must be when heart and flesh are failing ! Remember HIM who alone can take it away ; and so live to him, that in a dying hour he may not forsake you. It is sweet to be stayed upon him : it is sweet to feel, when approaching the deep waters of death, that

‘ Safe is the expanded wave,
Gentle as a summer’s eve ;
Not one object of his care
Ever suffer’d shipwreck there.’ ”

Mrs. Merton paused, for she was exhausted : yet her lips moved in prayer, and there was a lovely

smile upon them. The young girls felt awe-struck ; and pressed close to each other's side. The good old nurse passed her arm around them.

“ There is nothing terrible in death, my children,” said she, “ when we know that it is the gate of life.”

“ Nothing terrible, nothing, nothing,” said Mrs. Merton.

Mary bent down her head, and ventured to whisper, “ Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord JESUS CHRIST.”

“ Thanks, thanks be to God,” repeated Mrs. Merton, and expired.

It was on a very chill evening, quite after the close of autumn, that Emma and Mary visited the spot where Mr. and Mrs. Merton were laid to rest. Mr. Selby had taken them there to enjoy this sad satisfaction. The wind whistled through the yew tree, and its dark branches waved like the plume of a hearse. The grass was yellow and matted, the rose trees were bare, all looked dreary and melancholy ; but the lingering blossoms of the heart's-ease yet shone amid the scene of desolation, and peeped forth from among the dry stalks and shrivelled leaves that surrounded them. Emma looked : she smiled through her tears ; a sensation of delight stole over her spirit, and, as she turned away from the beloved spot, she murmured,

“ These sweet little flowers thrive every where.”

THE END.

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A G A T H O S ,

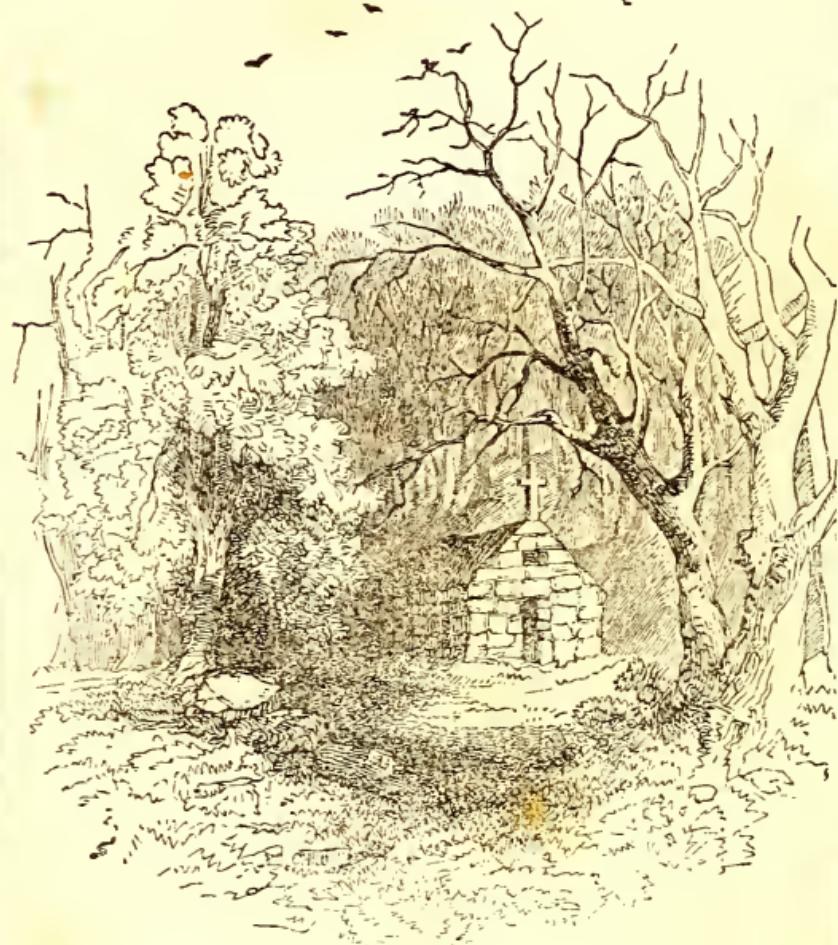


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THE HISTORY OF
OUR BLESSED LORD,



IN EASY VERSE.

ANNIVERSARY SERMON

TO THE

S c h o o l s

BELONGING TO THE

PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL
SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION

OF THE

CITY OF NEW-YORK.

*Delivered in St. John's Chapel in the Morning and St. Thomas' Church in the
Afternoon of Wednesday, 10th April, 1833.*

BY LEWIS P. BAYARD,
Rector of St. Clement's Church.

NEW-YORK:

PUBLISHED BY THE GEN. PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL
SUNDAY SCHOOL
UNION.



ANNIVERSARY SERMON.

"And now, little children, abide in Him, that when he shall appear we may have confidence and not be ashamed before him at his coming."—1 JOHN ii. 28.

THESE words were written by the disciple whom JESUS loved; and as we generally love those who are most like ourselves, we may judge that our Saviour loved St. John because he was more like him than any of the other disciples. And how great a praise it is to be like CHRIST. GOD we are told is love; and as CHRIST is GOD, so CHRIST is also love. In this divine virtue St. John seems in a very particular manner to have been like our Saviour. Like him he was kind and condescending, gentle and affectionate, in all his words and actions. Thus in his words how tenderly he speaks in the text to all who love GOD, calling them little children, that is, like little children, humble and ready to receive instruction. In the same manner our Saviour says to his disciples, "Little children, yet a little while I am with you:" and again he says, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you:" and again, "As my Father hath loved me, so have I loved you; continue ye

in my love. If ye keep my commandments ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. This is my commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you."

Now in the writings of St. John, especially in his epistles, this commandment of love to **God** seems to be the one of all others upon which he delights to speak, and which he urges as the great distinguishing law of the Christian religion, without an observance of which all pretences to goodness are false and useless: and it is related that when he was very old and infirm, and no longer able to preach, he was carried to church, where all he could say was, "Little children, love one another:" and when the congregation was wearied by his repeating the same thing, and inquired why he did so, he answered, because it was the command of our **Lord**, and that if they did nothing else, this alone was enough.

This venerable Apostle of our Lord **JESUS CHRIST** had great reason to write the words of the text. He was surrounded by many persons who were opposed to the Gospel of the Redeemer; not only were the Christians persecuted by the Jews, who denied that **CHRIST** was the true Messiah, but they were cruelly put to death by the Gentile or Heathen rulers, who denied the living and true **JEHOVAH**, and worshipped the idols of wood and of stone which their own hands had made, and their

own ignorance had led them to honor as gods. There were also false teachers among the number of those who professed and called themselves Christians, who denied that CHRIST was God, thereby attempting to take away from the Gospel its most important and essential truth,—a truth without which our preaching would be vain, and your faith in CHRIST would be also vain. For if CHRIST had been only a man, how could his death be considered more valuable than that of any other good man. But he declares in his Gospel, “ I am the resurrection and the life, he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:” and who but God could say this with truth? Such being the enemies of the Gospel by whom the Apostle was surrounded, you see the reason why he speaks as he does in the text: “ Now, little children, abide in Him.” Now, while you are exposed to the persecution of your open enemies, or to the danger of false doctrine from your pretended friends, “ abide in him,” the LORD of all power and might, without whom nothing is strong and nothing is holy. You are not to suppose because the Apostle says *now* in the text, that he would have us confine the application of his words to the age only in which he lived: it may with equal force apply to all ages of the Church until the end of time. At all times the exhortation of the text may be addressed to all Christians, and the ministers of CHRIST may say, “ Now, little child-

ren, abide in him :" for the Gospel has the same holy comfort to offer now that it ever had.

The same hope of pardon is still held out by it to all penitent sinners ; the world, the flesh, and the devil are still our enemies, from whom we are still as much in danger as they were to whom St. John wrote this letter. We are as much tempted by infirmities within and allurements without, and as much require the admonition which another apostle has given, "to be steadfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the **LORD**." Now, therefore, we are as much as ever called to "abide in **Him**," as the strongest tower of our refuge from danger; *now*, in all time of our prosperity, in all time of our adversity, in the most joyous scenes of life, and at the closing trial of death, He is still the same Almighty Helper and Saviour, "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

But the word *now* may be considered with a more particular reference to you, my dear children, who are assembled and met together on the present occasion, "to render thanks to God for the great benefits that you have received at his hands, to set forth his most worthy praise, to hear his most holy word, and to ask those things which are requisite and necessary as well for the body as the soul." Now in the days of thy youth remember thy **CREATOR**; while yet you are in the way of being taught your Christian duties by your parents at home, or by your teachers in the Sunday School,

and by God's ministers, whose sermons you hear every Sunday in church. When you grow up to be men and women, you may not have so much time to attend to these things as you now enjoy ; and if you had the time you would not any longer have the opportunity, for you know they are not men and women who are the scholars in our Sunday Schools ; but children as you are, and some of you "*little children*," as St. John calls you in the text, saying, " Now, little children, abide in Him." When you grow up you will some of you perhaps go to far distant places, where you may have none of the advantages of Christian knowledge which you now possess ; therefore *now*, while you have kind teachers ready to instruct you in the way to be happy all your life, in the way to die without fear, and in the glorious hope of going to heaven, there to dwell with God for ever ; *now* learn all you can of these divine truths of God's holy word, which you are constantly taught in the Sunday School and at church. As the bee works hard all the summer to make honey for its food in winter, so do you with like industry now in the season of childhood and of youth, lay up in the storehouse of your heart and mind those precious truths of the Bible, which will be to you a very present help in the time of trouble, " in the hour of death, and at the day of judgment." " Now *is the accepted time* ; now *is the day of salvation*."

" Now, little children, abide in Him." In whom ?

you ask,—I answer, in God, in CHRIST. Thus CHRIST himself says to his disciples, “I am the vine, ye are the branches; as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, no more can ye unless ye abide in me.” Now, I think, I hear you say, what is it to abide in CHRIST? This is what I wish very clearly to explain, so that you all may be able to understand it. Our Saviour explains it in the words I have just told you; he spoke to his disciples, saying, “*I am the vine, ye are the branches.*” CHRIST is the vine, and all Christians are united to CHRIST, as the branch to the vine; and being thus united to him is abiding in him. If a branch is broken off from a vine, or from a tree, we know it soon withers away and dies, and is good for nothing but to be burned. And so, if after being Christians, we should become so wicked as to renounce CHRIST, we should be like this withered branch, good for nothing in this world, and fit only to depart in the day of judgment from the left hand of our Judge into that “everlasting fire,” which our Saviour tells us is “prepared for the devil and his angels.” Now CHRIST is the head of the Church, and the Church is said to be his “body.” “*By one spirit we are baptized into one body.*” The most of you here present, I should think, have been baptized. You thus became, in the language of the Catechism, “members of CHRIST, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven.” Great is your privilege in

being thus made members of the Church of CHRIST : for you here receive instruction in all those things which concern your present and everlasting happiness. You are here taught to fear God and to keep his commandments. You are here taught how CHRIST loved you, and came from heaven to seek and to save those who were living in ignorance and wickedness. Good people, ever since the world began, have belonged to the Church of God ; and when they have died they have gone to heaven to be for ever with God and with the holy angels. Now, since you have joined such holy and venerable company as that which composes the true Church of God, you are directed by the good old Apostle, in the text, to continue in that faith, and love, and every virtue which the Gospel teaches you are the marks or badges by which true Christians are to be known. " Now, little children, abide in Him."

I hope you understand now what it is to abide in CHRIST. When you grow up and have left the Sunday School, you will have to meet with many very wicked people, some of whom may, perhaps, try to make you ashamed of being good. Now, I tell you of this beforehand, in order to warn you against the danger ; and to keep you from such a danger, I could not think of any better words to say to you, than those of the Apostle in the text, " Now, little children, abide in Him." You must remember what is said by the minister,

when he marks with the sign of the cross those he baptizes. You know he there says, "We receive this child into the congregation of CHRIST's flock, and do sign him with the sign of the cross, in token that hereafter he shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of CHRIST crucified, and manfully to fight under his banner against sin, the world, and the devil, and to continue CHRIST's faithful soldier and servant unto his life's end,"—that is "to abide in Him."

Now, that you may remember all your life what it is to abide in CHRIST, I will tell you about a good old man who was a bishop,* and was the friend and companion of St. John, who wrote the words of the text.

The name of this good bishop was Polycarp.† The wicked Heathen rulers, who hated the Christians, had him brought before them, and tried to make him blasphemē CHRIST. To which Polycarp replied, "Eighty and six years have I served him, and he hath never wronged me, and how can I now blasphemē my King and Saviour?" "I have wild beasts," said the wicked ruler. "Call them," said Polycarp. "I will tame your spirit by fire," said the Roman tyrant. "You threaten me," said Polycarp, "with the fire which burns only for a moment, but are yourself ignorant of the fire of eternal punishment reserved for the wicked in the

* See Note A at the end.

† See Note B at the end.

other world." When they had tied him to a stake and kindled the fire around him, yet he chose to continue CHRIST's faithful soldier and servant unto his life's end; and he offered the following prayer:—" O Father of thy beloved and blessed Son JESUS CHRIST,—O God of all principalities and of all creation, I bless thee, that thou hast counted me worthy of this day and this hour to receive my portion in the number of the martyrs in the cup of CHRIST. I praise thee for all these things. I bless thee, I glorify thee, by the Eternal High Priest, JESUS CHRIST, thy beloved Son, through whom and with whom, in the HOLY SPIRIT, be glory to Thee both now and for ever. Amen."—Thus you learn, my dear children, how you are to abide in CHRIST. You must believe in him, you must love him, and you must serve and honor him all the days of your life; then see what the Apostle shows you will be the reward of your faithfulness,—" When He shall appear we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at his coming;" that is, at the day of judgment we shall have confidence, and not be ashamed before him. You all know the meaning of " having confidence" and " being ashamed." You have " confidence" when, having done well, you approach your parents or teachers; you come to them with joy, knowing that you will receive their approbation. But on the contrary, when you have done wrong, you are " ashamed" to look them in the face, for you feel guilty, and

know that you have justly deserved their displeasure. Now you see what the Apostle means in the text, when he says, "If you will abide in CHRIST, that in the day of judgment you shall have confidence and not be ashamed before him." And at that day, dear children, I do most sincerely hope, you all may "have confidence and not be ashamed" before your Saviour, when he comes to judge the world. But in order that you may be thus eternally happy, remember, you must "abide" in CHRIST.

It has given me very great pleasure to see so many of you, my dear children, assembled in this Temple of the LORD; and I hope you will never forget what has now been said to you. I hope you will improve the present advantages which the noble institution of the Sunday School is now affording you; that you will love God's word; that you will love God's Church; that you will love God's holy day; that you will obey and love your parents and your teachers; and that you will love one another. Growing up in this divine love, which is the "fulfilling of the law," you will thus be prepared to be useful and happy in the world as men and women; and when death comes you will then be prepared with confidence to appear before your heavenly Father, because you will have your Saviour for your friend, and you know he has promised in the day of judgment, to all who truly love and serve him, that he will say, "Come, ye

blessed children of my Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world." God grant that this may be the happy sentence which you all may receive at that day, for JESUS CHRIST's sake.

NOTE A.

THE word bishop means an "overseer," and this shows what is the nature of his office. He is the overseer of all the ministers and congregations in his diocese or state. He is the chief minister, as a general in the army is commander-in-chief, having colonels and captains under him; so the bishop is chief ruler, and has under his authority the priests and deacons who belong to his diocese. This was the way all Churches were governed in the time of the Apostles, and for 1500 years afterward; and this is one reason that we say in the Creed, "I believe one Catholic Apostolic Church." The word Catholic means universal, and the Episcopal government of the Church was "universal," that is, prevailed all over the world, from the time of the Apostles, for 1500 years, until it was unhappily changed by Calvin and some others, who thereby became guilty of the sin of schism, which every body knows is a great sin.—See 1 Cor. iii. 3-5.

Q. Is not the Church "apostolic?"

A. The Church is apostolic, being *built on the foundation of the apostles, &c.* Eph. ii. 20.

Q. How is any Church now *apostolic*?

A. Every Church is apostolic which holds apostolic doctrine, ministry, sacraments, and worship.

Q. How is any Church apostolic in its ministry?

A. When it has the orders of the ministry which the apostles constituted.

Q. What orders are these?

A. "It is evident unto all men diligently reading Holy Scripture and ancient authors, that from the apostles' time there have been these orders of ministers in CHRIST's Church—Bishops, Priests, and Deacons."

Q. Who appointed these orders of the ministry?

A. GOD, by his "Providence and Holy Spirit," through JESUS CHRIST and his apostles.

Q. What is the internal call to the ministry?

A. It is that of the Holy Spirit renewing the soul, and exciting a person to take upon him the ministry for the glory of GOD and the salvation of men.

Q. But is not an external call or commission from GOD also necessary to constitute a minister?

A. Yes; *no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of GOD, as was Aaron.* Heb. v. 4.

Q. Did ever our blessed LORD exercise the ministry without this divine commission?

A. No; *CHRIST glorified not himself to be made a High Priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee.* Heb. v. 5.

Q. From whom is this commission to the ministry to be derived?

A. From CHRIST the *Head of the Church*, and therefore the source of all power in it.

Q. How is this commission to be derived from CHRIST?

A. Through the highest order of the ministry, first called Apostles, now called Bishops.

Q. Have the Bishops alone the power of ordaining or conferring this commission to the ministry?

A. Yes; they alone have the power of ordaining, that is, of commissioning the ministry.

Q. To whom did CHRIST first give power to ordain or commission the ministry?

A. To the apostles and their successors.

Q. How do you prove this?

A. He sent his apostles, and their successors to the *end of the world*, as his FATHER sent him, to be the ministers and governors of his Church. Matt. xxviii. 20; John xx. 21.

Q. Whom did the apostles commission as their successors?

A. Timothy at Ephesus, and Titus at Crete, were commissioned to ordain. 1 Tim. v. 22; Tit. i. 5.

Q. Did not the Elders or Presbyters who were then at Ephesus and Crete possess this power?

A. No; for then it would have been unnecessary to send Timothy and Titus there to exercise it.

Q. Were not Timothy and Titus the governors of these Elders or Presbyters, and therefore superior to them?

A. Yes; they were to judge them. 1 Tim. v. 19; Tit. iii. 10.

Q. What were the order of ministers who succeeded the apostles and Timothy and Titus in their powers of ordination and government called?

A. After the death of the apostles, the first order of the ministry were called Bishops.

Q. To whom was this title Bishop previously applied?

A. To the second order of the ministry, then called Presbyters or Elders, and now also Priests.

Q. Were not these Presbyters or Elders, though called Bishops, inferior in office to the apostles and their successors, afterward called Bishops?

A. Yes; the apostles, and Timothy and Titus, held distinct and superior offices, which have been conveyed to those now called Bishops.

Q. Is there not proof in history of this?

A. Yes; an ancient father, Theodoret, says expressly, that the name of Apostle was left to the earlier apostles.

Q. And what title does he say their successors took?

A. Their successors in the powers of ordination and government took, he says, the name of *Bishops*.

Q. Do not all the writers of the Church from the beginning bear testimony to the superiority of Bishops?

A. Yes; Ignatius, the disciple of St. John, and all the succeeding fathers, bear decided testimony to the superior powers of Bishops.

Q. State the testimony of Ignatius.

A. Ignatius says, "Let no man do any thing of what belongs to the Church without the Bishop."

Q. How long were Bishops thus considered throughout the universal Church?

A. Until the time of the Reformation, in the fifteenth century

Q. Did they then from the first ordain?

A. Yes; Presbyters never assumed the power of ordination until the Reformation.

Q. What are the peculiar and superior powers of Bishops?

A. To ordain persons to the ministry, and to superintend and govern the Church.

Catechism, No. III., p. 46.

N O T E B.

Bishop of Smyrna, in Asia Minor, of whom Eusebius, the historian, informs us, that he was familiarly conversant with the Apostles, and received the government of the Church of Smyrna from those who had been eye-witnesses and ministers of our LORD. It makes not a little for the honor of St. Polycarp, and argues his mighty diligence for the good of souls, that Ignatius, passing to his martyrdom, wrote to him and particularly recommended to him the inspection and oversight of his Church at Antioch, knowing him (says Eusebius) to be truly an apostolical man, and being assured that he would use his utmost care and fidelity in that matter. Smyrna was near to Ephesus, and St. John seems to have had a more than ordinary regard to this Church, it being, next Ephesus, the first of those seven famous Asian Churches to whom he directed his epistles, and St. Polycarp at this time bishop of it; for that he was that *angel* of the Church of Smyrna, to whom St. John writes in his Revelation, is not only highly probable, but by Usher in his Preface to the Epistle of Ignatius, put past all question.

THE following sermon was delivered by the author to the children of his Sunday School, immediately after a public examination.

The author hopes he has accomplished what is set forth in the title page.

He publishes the sermon because he ventures to believe this mode of preaching to children is well calculated to interest them and secure their attention. He found it so, in reference to his own school. For this, however, his scholars were prepared, as the schools with which he has been for the last two years connected, have been conducted on the *colloquial* plan. From this, he thinks, very perceptible benefits have been derived, not only to the scholars, but to the teachers.

By this means, his schools have been converted into Bible classes, from the youngest to the oldest scholars. His plan has been adopted with success by some of his brethren in the ministry.

He has always been in the habit of taking the general super-vision of his schools, and for the last two years, has had an ex-ercise of his own with the children; endeavoring to make the whole course of instruction as simple and as *practical* as possible.

The institution of Sunday Schools is a most blessed charity, and if the present performance shall prove in any way conducive to its extension, or its more effectual operation, the author will consider himself honored, but will give GOD the praise.

A

SERMON FOR CHILDREN.

Come, ye children, hearken unto me ; I will teach you the fear of the Lord.

34th Psalm, 11th verse.

I AM going to preach this sermon to you, little children, and therefore I ask you all to be very silent, and to listen to every word that I say. I will try to make it very plain, so that you may easily understand it ; but you know that if it is never so plain, you cannot understand it unless you are careful to listen.

This is the reason why the text begins by telling you to hearken ; for to hearken means to hear—to be still and attentive, and to try to understand.

This I am sure all the *good* children will do ; all those who learn their lessons well, and go regularly to their Sunday school in good time, and behave well while they are there, and mind all that their teachers bid them to do.

I shall think you are all such good children if I see you all sitting very still, and listening to what I am saying. But if I see any little girl or boy misbehaving or not listening, then I shall be afraid that that is a bad scholar and a disobedient child : and I dare say if I should ask your teachers they would tell me that I was right.

I have told you, that to hearken, means to hear or to listen, so now I will repeat the text to you, that you may remember it the better—“ Come, ye children, hearken unto me ; I will teach you the fear of the Lord.”

But some children may think it very strange that they should be preached to so particularly, I must therefore first tell them the reasons for doing so.

You must know then, that children, when they are baptized, are made members of the Church, as much as ever grown people are. They are brought into the fold of Christ, being dedicated to God the Father, who made them and all the world—to God the Son, who redeemed them and all mankind—and to God the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth them and all the people of God ; and therefore not only their parents,

but the ministers of the Church also, are bound to make them know their duty "so soon as they shall be able to learn."

Little children are the lambs of the flock of Christ; and our blessed Saviour, who was himself the good Shepherd, and who laid down his life for the sheep, gave very particular directions when he was on earth, to one of his apostles, to "feed his lambs."

He had taught his ministers as much as this before, for when some persons brought little children to him that he might touch them, and when his disciples forbade them, and did not wish to let them come, Jesus was much displeased, and said unto them, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God."

And at another time, when some persons asked him, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" he called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Whenever any persons are found who are disposed to learn, and to hear instruction, the Bible says, "God speaketh unto them as unto children." St. Paul also, writing to the Ephesians, says, "Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children." And because true Christians are humble, and of a meek and quiet spirit, St. John, in his epistles, often calls them "little children."

When you see that our Saviour took so much notice of little children—that he praised and loved them—and when you also see "how he exhorteth all men to follow their innocency," you need not wonder that his ministers should love them, and should be anxious to teach them too; especially when they recollect his command, which I mentioned to you before, that they should "feed his lambs"—which means to instruct them, and to watch over them, and to see that they are brought up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

Children then are a part of the family—the household—the flock of Christ—they are included among the number of those whom he hath redeemed with his most precious blood—and are bound to worship and glorify God here, that they may enjoy him hereafter; and the proper time to teach them in what manner they are to "worship and glorify God" is while they are young. You have all heard what the wise man said on this subject. He did not say that parents and ministers should wait until you are grown up before they tell you your duty; but he said, "Train up a child in the way he

should go." Train him up while he is a child, just as you would train a vine and lead it in the manner you wish to have it grow, while it is yet tender—"Train up a *child* in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

And to show how necessary this training or teaching is, he says in another place, that "a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame." Now only think how bad a child must be, when even his *mother* is ashamed of him! You know that mothers are so good and so affectionate that they will love their children even when every body else dislikes them. But here it is said, that if a child is left to himself, he will bring even his mother to shame! And I am sure I need not tell you, that whenever a child becomes *so* bad, every one must wish to avoid him; and then, besides making his mother unhappy, he must make himself unhappy too!

It is to prevent all this misery to *you* and to *your* parents, and to make you good children, so that you may be an honour, and a pride, and a pleasure to *your* parents, that so much pains is taken to train you up while you are young, to instruct you in the way you should go, to bring you up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

The words "nurture and admonition of the Lord" mean the same as teaching the knowledge of him, and impressing that knowledge on the mind: and "to train," means to catechise, (for it so reads in the margin of the Bible,) and you all know how careful the Church has been to provide good Catechisms, which make the Bible easy, and to give them to you: and how ready your ministers are to instruct you in them, and how much they desire to make you understand them.

Some of the best and greatest men that ever lived, have taken pleasure in writing Catechisms for little children, because, like their blessed Lord and Master, they loved little children, and wished to see them made happy by being informed of their duty.

Your Catechisms are among the best that any children have ever had; and to make them suitable for all, you have the "Scripture Catechism" for the younger children, and the "Church Catechism" in the Prayer Book, and "the Church Catechism broke into short Questions and Answers, and enlarged and explained," and proved to be all true, and taken out of the Bible, by pointing out the texts where every part is to be found. And in addition to your minister and your parents, you have your good Sunday school teachers, who are willing to assist your minister and your parents in teaching you all these things.

Now, after telling you so much, to show that it is right for the Church, and your minister, and your parents, and your Sunday school teachers, to take pains to instruct you in your duty, I think you will see that it is right sometimes to preach to you about it too, and especially when so large a number of children are collected together as are now here before me.

But besides all this, the Bible itself preaches to little children, for it says in one place, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right;" and in another place, as if to reprove those boys or girls who only mind their parents in some things, and disobey them in others, it says, "Children, obey your parents *in all things*;" and the fifth commandment, which begins, "Honour thy father and thy mother," is addressed chiefly to children, and so too are many other places, which I would beg you to mark whenever you find them in reading your Bibles; and get them by heart, and be careful to practise them.

In the book of Proverbs you will find the wise man continually saying, "My son," do this, and, "my son," avoid that; and, in the very beginning of it, it says, that it is intended "to teach the *young man* knowledge and discretion." And in the book of Ecclesiastes you are expressly commanded to "Remember your Creator in the days of your youth."

Well, now that you know it to be right to preach to children, and that we preach to you for your good, I must go on and explain the text to you—"Come, ye children, hearken unto me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord."

It is very likely that some of you will think you would rather not hear any thing about the fear of the Lord. One little boy may say, "I am already afraid to think about God, and I do not want to become more so."

Now this is one of the very reasons why I wish to preach to you about it; for you must know, little children, that the text is not intended to make you afraid of the Lord, as such children seem to suppose. The Bible teaches us to *love* God; and our Saviour calls this the first and great commandment—"Thou shalt *love* the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."

The fear of the Lord which I wish to teach you, is a *fear of offending him*. This is the fear of which the Bible speaks; and indeed the way in which you are to show that you truly love God, is by being afraid to disobey his commandments. I hope you will always be afraid to do any thing which his word has told you to be wrong, or to neglect what you know to be right; but you ought never to be afraid of God when you are

striving to do what he commands, and to please him, as good children should, for he has said, "I love them that love me;" and in order to encourage you to serve him while you are young, he has given the promise, "they that seek me early shall find me."

The fear of the Lord in the text then means, *a reverence* for him; a respect such as you would feel towards a parent, or any person whose good opinion you wish to gain; and this fear always includes love and confidence, and a desire to please him. This fear of the Lord is that holy fear which religious people have for him; and they are not afraid of God, because they know him to be good and gracious, and they believe his promise, that he loves them that love him. It is only wicked people, or those who neglect religion, that are afraid of God; and they may well be so, for he has threatened to punish them for not having a right fear of him, such as would keep them from sinning against him.

The fear of the Lord then, which the Bible teaches, is a fear of doing any thing that is wrong—any thing which God would dislike, or which he has forbidden, or which he has threatened to punish; and it implies also such a respect for the character of God, such a belief of his wisdom, and his power, and his goodness, as would inake "you love the thing which he commands, and desire that which he doth promise." You can yourselves tell whether children have this fear of God or not. If you were to hear a boy saying bad words, swearing, or profaning the name of God, when you know that God has said he will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain; would you not say at once "that boy has never been taught the fear of the Lord?" Or if you saw a girl or boy answering back to their father or mother, disobeying them when they had bid them do any thing, and perhaps mocking them, as only the very worst children in the world would do, when God has said, "Honour thy father and thy mother;" "Children, obey your parents in *all things*;" and when his word has threatened, "The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it;" would you not say that *that* child also had *not* been taught the fear of the Lord? and would you not say the same thing of those that profaned the Lord's day, when the commandment says, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy;" or of those that tell wilful falsehoods, when it says in the Bible, "all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone?"

Yes, I am sure you would say of all such as wilfully misbehave, and of all too who never say their prayers and never read God's word, "there is no fear of God before their eyes;" and you would think too that they had never been at a Sunday school, where children are taught the fear of the Lord. But I must tell you a thing which I am almost ashamed to tell, and which I would not tell, if I did not hope it would shame the bad boy to whom it relates, if he is here, or any others who may act like him.

I was one day going through the street, and heard a boy using very bad language to another, and presently he began to swear, and profane the most holy name of God. I was shocked, and thought this must be one of those poor children who had been left to himself, and had never been instructed. So I went to him, and asked him whether he had ever attended a Sunday school? and I cannot tell you how he surprised me when he said he had, and that he belonged to one of the schools now before me. If I could recollect his name I would think it right to tell it aloud to you all: for what can be so base as for a boy who goes to Sunday school, who is every Sunday taught to reverence God and not to take his name in vain; who repeats the commandments, and says the Catechism, yet to behave so wickedly? Such a boy may perhaps learn his lessons well, but that only makes him the more guilty for not minding them: he may fear his *teachers*, but he does not fear *God*.

If there were many such cases, I should be sorry that your teachers were spending so much of their time to no purpose; but it is only now and then we meet with such boys. I would perhaps not have mentioned this, if I had not yesterday fallen in with another like the one I have spoken of. I am glad to tell you that he did *not* belong to any of *our* schools.

I have said enough to show you what is meant by not fearing the Lord, and now you might almost understand yourselves what is meant by the text when it says, "Come, ye children, and hearken unto me; and I will teach you the fear of the Lord."

I hope many of you are yourselves examples of what it means—that you have learned to reverence his name—that you read his holy word, desiring to know how you ought to live to please him—that you keep holy his sacred day—that you honour your parents, and love your brothers and sisters, and say your prayers to God for them, as well as for yourselves, every morning and evening, and "walk in his fear all the day long." This is what is meant by fearing the Lord;

and this fear of the Lord is said in many places in Scripture to be "the beginning of wisdom," and I will give you two reasons why it is so.

The first is, that it will make you respected, and beloved, and happy, in this life. This is taught you in every part of the Bible, and I am sure you might discover the same thing by looking round upon the world, for who is so happy as he who in all his actions hates what God hath forbidden, and does what he hath commanded, who avoids all strifes and quarrels, who maintains love and friendship with his neighbours, who "follows peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."

If *you* do so you will gain the favour of men, or if not you will still be sure of God's protection, and that is enough; for if the Lord is on your side, you need not fear what man can do to you. "For when a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh his enemies to be at peace with him."

Thus you will find "the fear of the Lord is honour, and glory, and gladness, and a crown of rejoicing. The fear of the Lord maketh a cheerful heart, and giveth joy and gladness, and a long life." Fear the Lord then, if you would be truly happy, for they that fear him lack nothing. "The lions do lack and suffer hunger, but they that fear the Lord will lack no manner of thing that is good."

"As for the ungodly, it is not so with them." The wicked person has no real friend on earth, and God is his enemy; "for the countenance of the Lord is *against* them that do evil, to root out the *remembrance* of them from the earth. The Lord approveth the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish."

Thus you see that if you wish to be happy even here, you must be good. This will make you beloved by all around you, and make the hearts of your parents to rejoice over their child; and if they should die while you are yet young, you may still look up to God to take care of you, and say, "When my father and my mother forsake me, the Lord taketh me up."

The first reason then which I have given you, why this fear of the Lord about which I have spoken, is the beginning of wisdom, is, that it will make you respected, and beloved, and happy in *this* life. But another life is before you when this is past; and this fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom in respect of *that* also, for it will be certain to make you happy hereafter. Not that you can make yourselves worthy of God's favour, so as to demand any reward from

him, for “we are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works or deservings;” but God has made great promises to them that love him and keep his commandments. We are all sinners from the youngest to the oldest, and we have reason to pray God to have mercy upon us as offenders against him. We have every day reason to say, as we do in our prayers, that “we have erred and strayed from his ways like lost sheep—that we have left undone those things which we ought to have done; and that we have done those things which we ought not to have done;” and therefore we beg him “not to deal with us according to our sins, neither to reward us according to our iniquities.”

Now it is your privilege, little children, to know that God is good; that though we have sinned against him, “there is forgiveness with him, that he may be feared;” you are taught “to enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise;” you are taught “to be thankful unto him, and to speak good of his name.” You have all heard that beautiful collect which teaches us to pray to God as him that “hateth nothing that he hath made, and doth forgive the sins of all those that are penitent;” and you have read in the Bible, “that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

When our blessed Saviour in the fulness of time came into the world to die for sinners according to the Scriptures, he was very careful to impress this lesson, that God was good; and in that prayer which we call the Lord’s prayer, because we received it from him, he instructed us to look up to that great Being who dwelleth in heaven, and to call him “our Father”—“Our Father, who art in heaven;” and because he knew how weak we are of ourselves, and how unable to serve him as we ought, he promised to send his Holy Spirit, that Spirit which will put into our minds good desires, and enable us to bring them to good effect; and to encourage you to pray for his assistance, he has assured you, that if your earthly fathers “will give good gifts unto their children, much more will your Father who is in heaven give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him.” If then, little children, you are willing to be taught the fear of the Lord, and if you pray to him, he will give you that Holy Spirit; and if you sincerely obey its influences, you will find that his “grace is sufficient for you; his strength will be made perfect in your weakness;” he will “guide you with his counsel while you live, and after that

receive you into glory." Jesus Christ, your blessed Saviour, when he had suffered the sharpness of death, opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. He has risen from the dead, the first-fruits of them that slept; and is now ascended unto his Father and your Father, to his God and your God; and he has given his promise to them that love and obey him, that because he lives, they shall live also—that they shall be with him where he is to behold his glory.

You see that if you are good, and put your trust in him, you need not fear to die whenever God pleases to call you out of this world. You shall "walk through the valley of the shadow of death, and fear no evil;" for your Saviour, who has promised that he will come and receive you unto himself, will support and defend you. This, then, is the second reason why you should fear the Lord. "Whoso feareth the Lord, it shall go well with him at the last, and he shall find favour in the day of his death."

Now I have told you what "the fear of the Lord" means; and I have given you two reasons why it is "the beginning of wisdom." The first is, that it will make you happy in *this* life; the second, that it will make you happy in the *next*.

Recollect then it is never too soon to begin to be truly wise, any more than it can be too soon to begin to be truly happy. Besides this, you may die while you are young; and only think what it must be to be afraid to die, as all wicked children surely must. But if you fear God while you live, you will not be afraid of him when you come to die. This we *know*, for every year some of the children of our Sunday schools die, and when they have been good children, it delights us to hear how willing they were to go to God—how they thanked their kind instructors for teaching them the fear of the Lord—how they trusted in his promises, and believing in the merits of Him who redeemed them by his blood, and sanctified them by his grace, did not fear to die—how they consoled their parents and friends, by telling them not to weep for them, for that they knew they were going to be happy with God!

These are the blessed consequences of learning "the fear of the Lord," and doing his will. I hope and pray that you all will fear and obey him, and therefore I shall close my sermon, in the words of St. John—"And now, little children, abide in him, that when he shall appear, ye may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming."



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